

More projects in Wilmington, Dover and Seaford to receive Downtown Development Districts Funding

\$4.5 million in grant funding for 11 projects will leverage \$130 million in private investment

DOVER, DE – Building on progress in Delaware's downtowns, Governor Jack Markell and the Delaware State Housing Authority announced on Monday that 11 new downtown revitalization projects in Wilmington, Dover and Seaford will receive \$4.5 million in grant funding through Delaware's Downtown Development Districts program.

Since the first grant awards in April 2015, the DDD program has worked to spur private investment in Delaware's cities. To date, \$14 million in grants through the program has leveraged \$290 million in private investment in designated downtown districts in all three counties.

"When we started the Downtown Development Districts program, we thought that a modest amount of state grant money would encourage private investors to invest significantly in our downtown areas," said Governor Jack Markell. "It's clear that is happening. We're thrilled with the progress we've seen in all three counties and look forward to even more investment in our cities."

The DDD program, administered by the Delaware State Housing Authority, was created by legislation proposed by Governor Markell and passed unanimously in May 2014 by the General Assembly.

In January 2015, Governor Markell designated the downtown areas of Seaford, Dover, and Wilmington as Delaware's first three Downtown Development Districts. To incentivize development, applicants receiving DDD grants are eligible for

up to 20 percent of their construction costs in the form of a rebate. Grants are awarded only when projects are complete. Governor Markell announced in March that the DDD program would expand through new district designations. On June 1, 10 cities and towns from across Delaware submitted applications to designate a new Downtown Development District, providing more evidence of the support and success of the program. Those applications are still under review by the Office of State Planning Coordination.

"The DDD program is working to attract significant private investment into our urban centers," said Anas Ben Addi, Director of the Delaware State Housing Authority. "The progress is real and visible, and we're excited to support new projects that will bring even more people into our downtown areas to live and work."

"As a not for profit organization providing health care for the community, we must always be fiscally responsible while also reinvesting in patient care services," said Steven A. Rose, RN MN, President and CEO of Nanticoke Health Services. "Nanticoke has grown significantly over the past several years and we are outgrowing our space. Through the Downtown Development District Grant, Nanticoke will be able to repair an aging building, move team members providing business services to that building, and make room within the hospital for expanded patient care services. Without the Downtown Development District Grant, this expansion would be more difficult and take longer to complete. We are grateful for the foresight of the state to develop such a grant program."

"The Downtown Development District grants, and the public confidence they reflect, help take these projects from concept to reality by assuring investors and lenders that they are vital to the city's growth and development, while also leveraging exponentially more private investment," said Michael Hare, Senior Vice President of Development at The Buccini/Pollin Group.

Project details

- Loockerman Plaza LLC plans to develop a three-story mixed use building between Loockerman Street and North Street in downtown Dover. The building will include retail on the first floor and apartments on the second and third floors, while maintaining the pedestrian courtyard between the two streets.
- Nanticoke Memorial Hospital will rehab a former furniture store in Seaford into a twostory building that will house seven ancillary departments and a community training center. The development will allow Nanticoke to expand its role as a primary employment provider and provider of healthcare services in western Sussex County.
- Delaware Center for Homeless Veterans is rehabilitating a vacant building on East 8th Street in Wilmington, formerly the Layton Home, into a 51-unit apartment building that will provide permanent housing for veterans. Renovations will include Energy Star rated windows and appliances, and a variety of common areas for resident programs and activities.
- Urban Connect LLC plans to rehabilitate five vacant parcels along Market and King Streets in Wilmington into a mixed-use facility that will anchor a restaurant, a technical center and 10 market-rate apartments.
- 2 East 7th Street LLC plans to rehabilitate a historic building in Wilmington into a mixed-use structure that will include a high-end Italian restaurant on the ground floor and 15 apartments on the upper floors.

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